

COUNTRY DATA: CHINA: Information from the CIA World Factbook

INTRODUCTION

For centuries China stood as a leading civilization, outpacing the rest of the world in the arts and sciences, but in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the country was beset by civil unrest, major famines, military defeats, and foreign occupation. After World War II, the Communists under MAO Zedong established an autocratic socialist system that, while ensuring China's sovereignty, imposed strict controls over everyday life and cost the lives of tens of millions of people. After 1978, MAO's successor DENG Xiaoping and other leaders focused on market-oriented economic development and by 2000 output had quadrupled. For much of the population, living standards have improved dramatically and the room for personal choice has expanded, yet political controls remain tight. China since the early 1990s has increased its global outreach and participation in international organizations.

GEOGRAPHY

Location	Eastern Asia, bordering the East China Sea, Korea Bay, Yellow Sea, and South China Sea, between North Korea and Vietnam
Area	9,596,961 sq km
Climate	extremely diverse; tropical in south to subarctic in north
Natural Resources	coal, iron ore, petroleum, natural gas, mercury, tin, tungsten, antimony, manganese, molybdenum, vanadium, magnetite, aluminum, lead, zinc, rare earth elements, uranium, hydropower potential (world's largest)
Total Renewable Water Resources	2,829.6 cu km (1999)
Freshwater Withdrawal	total: 549.76 cu km/yr (7%/26%/68%) per capita: 415 cu m/yr (2000)
Natural Hazards	frequent typhoons (about five per year along southern and eastern coasts); damaging floods; tsunamis; earthquakes; droughts; land subsidence volcanism: China contains some historically active volcanoes including Changbaishan (also known as Baitoushan, Baegdu, or P'aektu-san), Hainan Dao, and Kunlun although most have been relatively inactive in recent centuries
Environmental	air pollution (greenhouse gases, sulfur dioxide particulates) from reliance

Issues	on coal produces acid rain; water shortages, particularly in the north; water pollution from untreated wastes; deforestation; estimated loss of one-fifth of agricultural land since 1949 to soil erosion and economic development; desertification; trade in endangered species
PEOPLE	
Population	1,330,141,295 (July 2010 est.)
Ethnic Groups	Han Chinese 91.5%, Zhuang, Manchu, Hui, Miao, Uighur, Tujia, Yi, Mongol, Tibetan, Buyi, Dong, Yao, Korean, and other nationalities 8.5% (2000 census)
Religions	Daoist (Taoist), Buddhist, Christian 3%-4%, Muslim 1%-2% note: officially atheist (2002 est.)
Languages	Standard Chinese or Mandarin (Putonghua, based on the Beijing dialect) (official), Yue (Cantonese), Wu (Shanghainese), Minbei (Fuzhou), Minnan (Hokkien-Taiwanese), Xiang, Gan, Hakka dialects, minority languages (see Ethnic groups entry)
Literacy Rate	91.6%
Major Infectious Diseases	degree of risk: intermediate food or waterborne diseases: bacterial diarrhea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever vectorborne diseases: Japanese encephalitis and dengue fever soil contact disease: hantaviral hemorrhagic fever with renal syndrome (HFRS) animal contact disease: rabies note: highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza has been identified in this country; it poses a negligible risk with extremely rare cases possible among US citizens who have close contact with birds (2009)
GOVERNMENT	
Type	Communist state
Independence	1 October 1949 (People's Republic of China established); notable earlier dates: 221 BC (unification under the Qin Dynasty); 1 January 1912 (Qing Dynasty replaced by the Republic of China)
Constitution	most recent promulgation 4 December 1982 with amendments in 1988, 1993, 2004
Legal System	based on civil law system; derived from Soviet and continental civil code legal principles; legislature retains power to interpret statutes; constitution ambiguous on judicial review of legislation; party organs exercise authority over judiciary; has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction

ECONOMY	
Agricultural Products	rice, wheat, potatoes, corn, peanuts, tea, millet, barley, apples, cotton, oilseed; pork; fish
Industries	mining and ore processing, iron, steel, aluminum, and other metals, coal; machine building; armaments; textiles and apparel; petroleum; cement; chemicals; fertilizers; consumer products, including footwear, toys, and electronics; food processing; transportation equipment, including automobiles, rail cars and locomotives, ships, and aircraft; telecommunications equipment, commercial space launch vehicles, satellites
Import commodities	electrical and other machinery, oil and mineral fuels, optical and medical equipment, metal ores, plastics, organic chemicals
Import Partners	Japan 12.27%, Hong Kong 10.06%, South Korea 9.04%, US 7.66%, Taiwan 6.84%, Germany 5.54% (2009)
Export Commodities	electrical and other machinery, including data processing equipment, apparel, textiles, iron and steel, optical and medical equipment
Export Partners	US 20.03%, Hong Kong 12.03%, Japan 8.32%, South Korea 4.55%, Germany 4.27% (2009)
Per Capita GDP	\$6,700 (2009 est.)
Population below poverty line	2.8%

*CITATIONS: All information included above is extracted from the CIA World Factbook except where noted.